

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 17, 1894, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Beinn Bhreagh, Victoria County, Cape Breton, N. S. May 17th 1894. My dear Alec:

It seems ages since you left yet you are only as far as Portland. I do miss you dreadfully, and it seems as if you could not get back for such a long time.

Last night I went to bed, but got up again in double quick time when I found myself lying in a puddle of warm water! My faithful hot water bag had given away after months of service and had been leaking all the evening, spreading all over the middle of the bed. It was too late to call Maggie, so I spread your dressing gown and sheets over the wet place, and passed the night between on the edge of the bed. In the morning I was awakened by smoke coming from my morning room, and going in I found a piece of muslin on the sofa smouldering. I pulled it on the floor, tried to put out the fire by stamping on it with a log of wood then the back of the shovel, no use, so I picked the muslin up and put it in the bath tub and turned on the water, and no damage was done beyond the ruination of my pretty muslin for curtains. I never before understood how true the old saying, a great deal of smoke but little fire, is for the room was filled with the densest and most suffocating smoke I ever was in, and it was almost impossible to stay in the bath room long enough to turn on the water, but there was no flame at all only a rim of red leaving black behind. Mr. McCurdy laughs at me for putting out the fire, then calling for Charles and Maggie, but it was only to open windows, etc.

2

Miss Stearns spent last night with us. I like her very much. Miss Archibald is here, and I may persuade her to stay all night but I don't like to seem too anxious about having people here. No one will think anything if I don't put it in their heads by my actions. If I can't get

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Miss Archibald to stay I may ask Mrs. Kennan to take me after the club. Miss McCurdy is not coming till Friday, but I will go on and meet her and go with her to Halifax Friday, the doctor says I can't go before. Mr. McCurdy seems to be suffering a good deal with his back, he can't stand up straight and sits very cross-ways, but he is going to the club tonight, although it is a horrid cold day. We have had no nice weather since you left it's cold and raw.

I fear you are boiling, poor fellow. I wish you would write me sometimes. Your telegram came since I began this. It's awfully quiet and lonely without you.

Your Mabel. Josie McLean is much disturbed because you went on board his new steamboat, he says he did not mean you to see it until he had it all fitted up, the way you wanted the stairs removed and everything done to make it comfortable for your father. He wants you to reserve judgement until it is ready to be seen.